

## I. District Responsibilities and Benefits

### A. District Responsibilities

School Districts Support the UAAACT project by:

1. Appointing special education staff members to serve on the local UAAACT team and provide released time for appointed individuals to participate in UAAACT activities (At least 2 days per month are recommended). See “Sample Letter” in appendix. UAAACT activities could include conducting student assessments and follow-up sessions, attending training, report writing, etc.
2. Providing released time for Leadership Council members to attend council meetings
3. Providing substitutes when needed.
4. Reimbursing UAAACT members mileage for travel to and from student evaluations and follow-up sessions
5. Allowing time for report writing.
6. Assisting with the repair of team equipment above and beyond UAAACT allocations

### B. Benefits for School Districts

The UAAACT Teams support School Districts by:

1. Providing a multi-disciplinary team to conduct evaluations of students in their own environment. There is no cost to districts that have a participating UAAACT member.
2. Conducting follow-up services for students previously evaluated.
3. Providing access to equipment in the UAAACT equipment inventories.
4. Preparing written reports of students evaluated.
5. Providing local, regional and national training opportunities for UAAACT team members.
6. Encouraging and preparing UAAACT members to provide training to district personnel regarding use of augmentative equipment and assistive technology.
7. Planning an augmentative communication conference every other year for UAAACT members, parents and other professionals.
8. Providing access to regional and national augmentative communication and assistive technology specialists.

## II. Roles and Responsibilities

### A. Utah State Office of Education Representative

1. Provide suggestions and guidance to the Leadership Council
2. Serve as a liaison between the Utah State Office of Education and the UAAACT Leadership Council
3. Serve as a liaison between Special Education Directors and the UAAACT project

## **B. Computer Center for Citizens With Disabilities (CCCD) Staff**

1. Provide Training and support to UAAACT Team members
2. Assist with assessments when requested by UAAACT Teams
3. Suggest equipment purchases for central inventory and team inventories
4. Check UAAACT equipment in and out, repair and maintain items in the UAAACT lending library, and order new items approved by the UAAACT Leadership Council
5. Conduct assistive technology consultations for students with disabilities and inform UAAACT teams of consultation results
6. Support parents and students who are working with UAAACT teams by providing training and equipment troubleshooting services
7. Assist in writing the UAAACT grant

## **C. UAAACT Leadership Council**

### **1. Chairperson**

- a. Serves as contact person with the USOE liaison, district special education directors, and UAAACT Leadership Council members
- b. Oversee all assignments made to council members
- c. Conducts/oversees council meetings
- d. Prepares UAAACT Leadership Council agendas
- e. Assists in writing the UAAACT grant
- f. Works to achieve or maintain Competency Level III and supports UAAACT members in improving their assessment and technology skills

### **2. Council Members**

- a. Review and update UAAACT Policies and Procedures Manual as needed
- b. Approve equipment purchases and repair of UAAACT equipment
- c. Publish a UAAACT newsletter
- d. Collect contact hours and prepare service reports
- e. Assist with conference and training planning
- f. Deal with budget issues
- g. Disseminate information to assigned teams
- h. Work to achieve or maintain Competency Level III and supports UAAACT members in improving their assessment and technology skills.

Note: UAAACT Leadership Council Members will be eligible to attend a major technology conference during their two-year term as a council member. The Council Chairperson will be eligible to attend one additional conference. Approved expenses related to attending the conferences will be paid by the UAAACT project.

## D. Team Leader

1. Lead and administer the UAAACT Team program
2. Facilitate student assessments by receiving referrals and assigning a case manager
3. Delegate critical team responsibilities:
  - a. Scheduling student evaluations and follow-up sessions
  - b. Tracking student records and reports
  - c. Collecting, organizing, and reporting services provided to the UAAACT Leadership Council each year
  - d. Managing and accounting for team equipment
  - e. Conducting district workshops, technical assistance, and support to IEP teams
4. Communicate with the Leadership Council member serving their area, keeping informed of Utah State Office of Education and Leadership Council initiatives
5. Participate as a team member
6. Notify the Leadership Council of team vacancies or new team members
7. Prepare an annual team training plan (see “UAAACT Travel Policy” in appendix)
8. Conduct positive public relations with district administrators in the team area
9. Work to achieve or maintain Competency Level III and support team members in improving their assistive technology assessment skills.

Note: Team Leaders will be eligible to attend a major technology conference (usually CSUN) every other year during their service as a team leader. The team leader may delegate attendance at the technology conference to another team member if the team leader is unable to attend the conference, or if the team leader feels having another team member attend the conference would serve to improve the overall skills of the team.

## E. Team Members

1. Participate with other team members in conducting skillful assessments of students who may benefit from assistive technology devices or services.
2. Follow district procedures in obtaining permission to participate in evaluations, follow-up sessions and training activities
3. Actively demonstrate team commitment in the areas of attendance, punctuality, dependability, and completion of task, i.e., reports, status notes, communication, contributing throughout the assessment and follow-up process
4. Follow established district and team procedures
5. Communicate with team leader, other team members and professionals involved with students who are served
6. Promote a positive image of the UAAACT Project
7. Promote teaming strategies
8. Perform duties as assigned by the team leader
9. Work to achieve and maintain Competency Level II or III as outlined in the appendix.

### III. Selection/Removal of Members

#### A. Selection of Leadership Council

1. Each of the five established UAAACT regions will be represented by a UAAACT Leadership Council member. On a rotating basis, each team in the region will have an opportunity to select a team member who will represent the region.
2. Each council member must have approval from his/her district administration to serve on the Leadership Council
3. Each council member will serve a two-year term. The council chairperson may serve an advisory role for an additional year if approved to do so by his/her district administration.

#### B. Selection of Team Leaders

1. Team Leaders are selected by their team members or appointed by their district special education director or directors in the team area
2. When it becomes necessary to select a new team leader, the leadership council would suggest that, if possible, the new team leader be a team member with Level III competencies.

#### C. Selection and Removal of Team Members

##### 1. **Selecting New Team Members**

- a. New team members are selected by their district special education director, usually after consulting with the team leader.
- b. The special education director writes a letter (or email) in support of the individual selected as a new team member to the leadership council. Please use the "Sample Letter" in appendix to insure the necessary information is provided to the leadership council.
- c. A variety of disciplines should be represented on the team. It is strongly recommended that each team have a speech therapist, a special education teacher and a motor specialist (OT or PT).
- d. Teams consist of, but are not limited to, speech therapists, special education teachers, regular classroom teachers, psychologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, administrators, computer specialists, audiologists and vision specialists
- e. Teams should generally consist of five to six members
- f. Specialists may be invited to serve as temporary UAAACT team members if their expertise is needed in a particular student evaluation. For example, if a student with a vision impairment was referred to the UAAACT team for evaluation and that team did not have a vision specialist on the team, a vision specialist from the school district or from the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind may join the UAAACT team for the evaluation of that student.

## **2. Removal of a Team Member**

A member may be removed from a UAAACT team at the discretion of the special education director, in consultation with the team leader, for the following reasons:

1. A change in their work assignment that prohibits further participation on the UAAACT team
2. Low attendance at UAAACT events
3. Failure to complete assignments
4. Failure to progress toward level II certification
5. Failure to demonstrate active commitment to the team

## **IV. Student Assessment Procedures**

### **Step 1 - Obtain Referral Packet**

1. The school staffing team will provide the special education director/designee with the following referral information:
  - A. Copy of permission to evaluate (may use school district "Permission to Evaluate" form but indicate UAAACT assessment in some way)
  - B. Completed UAAACT referral form (see "Referral Form" in Forms Section)
  - C. Most recent staffing information
  - D. Most recent reports in the areas below:
    1. cognitive ability
    2. functional academic skills
    3. language and communication skills
    4. independent living skills
    5. motor development
  - E. Current IEP/IHP.
  - F. Other pertinent information
2. Information for referral is sent to the special education director/designee
3. Special education director/designee sends referral packet to UAAACT team leader or case manager
4. UAAACT referrals are prioritized at the district level

### **Step 2 - Initial Contact** (see "UAAACT Evaluation Check List" in Forms Section)

1. Team leader assigns a case manager from among the UAAACT team members, preferably a team member from the school district where the student attends school.
2. Case manager begins a log of contacts
3. Case manager contacts principal, teacher and referral source in person or by phone as appropriate to facilitate the initial evaluation
4. Case manager will acquaint the teacher of the student who has been referred for a UAAACT evaluation with the evaluation process

### Step 3 - Team Planning

1. The team leader and case manager will determine the composition of the UAAACT evaluation team and ensure team members who will be participating in the evaluation have the essential information regarding the student prior to the assessment. Note: Not all UAAACT team members need to participate in every evaluation, but every evaluation should be conducted by an appropriate multi-disciplinary team. For example, if it is known that the student to be evaluated has normal vision and hearing and there is an audiologist or a vision specialist on the team, the audiologist or vision specialist may be excused from this particular evaluation. Similarly, if the UAAACT team does not have an audiologist on the team, but the student appears to have some hearing loss, it is suggested that the UAAACT team invite an audiologist to serve as a temporary UAAACT member for that particular assessment. CCCD staff members are often available to join in the evaluation process if requested. Also, evaluations may be conducted at CCCD if the UAAACT team determines that it is not necessary to conduct the evaluation at the student's school.
2. A team meeting, conference phone call, or email by the team leader or case manager is held prior to the assessment to:
  - a. Determine needs and decide types of assessment needed
  - b. Determine each team member's role
  - c. Decide what equipment/materials will be needed and who will transport these items
  - d. Decide the date of the initial evaluation and set a schedule for the day.
  - e. Arrange transportation of team members if necessary
  - f. Discuss parent involvement at the initial evaluation
  - g. Case manager outlines what additional information is needed and coordinates initial visit
  - h. Arrange back-up plan in case of snow, illness, etc.

### Step 4 - Scheduling

1. Case manager makes second call to the student's teacher to:
  - a. Request any additional information
  - b. Schedule visit
  - c. Confirm date and time
  - d. Arrange location/space within the student's school for the assessment and trial use of equipment
  - e. Clarify what will occur during the evaluation and who will participate
2. Case manager or designee calls parent/guardian to:
  - a. Invite them to the evaluation
  - b. Inform them of assessment time and place
  - c. Become acquainted with the parent
  - d. Begin positive public relations
  - e. Obtain information, as necessary

### Step 5 - Confirm Evaluation Appointment

1. Two or three days prior to the scheduled assessment, the case manager confirms the date with the student's teacher and parent

## Step 6 - Assessment Conducted

1. A brief (15 to 20 minute) on site UAAACT Team Meeting (UAAACT Team members only) before evaluation to:
  - a. Set the schedule for the day
  - b. Review student information, IEP, recent testing
  - c. Confirm assessment tools have arrived
  - d. Assign UAAACT team member to conduct classroom observation of student, parent interview, teacher interview, provide computer and equipment setup, make status notes
2. Conduct Student observation with appropriate data collection (see data collection forms in Forms Section)
3. Interview parents (see “Parent Interview” form in Forms Section)
4. Interview teachers and other appropriate members of the student’s IEP team (see “Teacher Interview” form in Forms Section)
5. Have the student try assistive technology products such as augmentative communication devices, computer software, switches or picture communication books. The goal of the assessment is to determine if assistive technology might help the student in their progress toward the goals in their IEP, or allow them to work successfully in a more inclusive environment with the use of assistive technology. (“Assistive technology devices and assistive technology services for students with disabilities may be provided as special education, related services, or, in the case of students with disabilities to be educated in regular classes, as supplementary aids and services.” Special Education Rules from the Utah State Office of Education, p.45, August 2001) Fit the technology to the user, not the user to the technology. Considered low tech solutions. Even the best electronic system needs a backup system. The backup system could be a communication book or a communication file saved on a computer disk.

## Step 7 - Post Assessment Team Meeting (UAAACT Team members only at Evaluation Site)

1. Brainstorm solutions
2. Prepare status notes. Include assistive technology products the student tried, the results of each item tried, strategies and devices that might be helpful, and other ideas that may assist the student, parents or IEP team. Status notes are signed and dated by team members who participate in the evaluation.
3. Select a team member to share assessment information as outlined in Step 8 below.

## Step 8- Summary Meeting with IEP Team and Parents

1. The UAAACT team shares information and explores resources and plans for implementation of assistive technology devices.
2. Provide one or more assistive technology devices for a trial use period of 30 days to three months as necessary. This could be an AAC device, computer access tool, software, switch, communication booklet, etc. that has the potential to benefit the student with their educational program. The device or devices could be items that are available at the school or UAAACT equipment you will provide on loan.
3. Provide basic instruction on how to use the assistive technology product or products the student will use during the trial use period.
4. Have a member of the IEP team sign for the equipment if you leave UAAACT equipment for trial use.

5. Schedule a follow-up visit, usually within four weeks, to provide additional training, add vocabulary to an AAC device, or review student progress.
6. Give a copy of the status notes to a member of the IEP team. The case manager keeps a copy of the status notes for the team records and to refer to when preparing the more formal written report.
7. Leave IEP team members with data collection forms and provide instructions for their use. Help them to understand that the decision regarding the student's need for assistive technology will be based on data they collect as they observe the student's use of assistive technology products. All decisions regarding a student's educational program should be data based. In collecting data, encourage the IEP team to seek evidence that will document the student's improvement in some aspect of their educational program. You may consider documenting some of the following: an increase in written or oral communication, faster acquisition of academic skills, improvement in quality, quantity, accuracy or frequency in assigned work, improved behavior, spontaneity, independence, increased persistence, or even a happier student
8. Provide the parents and members of the IEP team with the case manager's contact information and conclude the visit.

### Step 9 - Reporting

1. Complete the "formal" report within two weeks of when the assessment is complete. The assessment may take several sessions over two to three months. The "formal" report is to be generated after the assessment is complete. If the evaluation continues beyond one month, a brief report on each follow-up visit should be initiated and provided to the IEP team with a copy of the brief report kept in the team file for use in preparing the more formal report at the conclusion of the evaluation.
2. Formal reports should be sent to the student's parents, a member of the student's IEP team, and a copy should be placed in the student's file. If follow-up visits are conducted after the formal report has been completed, follow-up status notes may be provided to the IEP team and kept in team files.

### Step 10 - Follow-up

1. The case manager works with the team leader to schedule additional visits with the student, IEP team members, or parents
3. Determine which UAAACT team members will participate in the follow-up visit. CCCD staff members are often available to provide follow-up services.
4. The case manager maintains the log sheet, contact hours, and all records (status notes, formal report) for team
5. The case manager maintains periodic contact with the parent and the child's teacher
6. Status notes are left with the IEP team after each UAAACT team visit
7. The case manager will attend IEP meetings or IEP team meetings as necessary
8. Continue to provide follow-up services as changes in the student's needs occur

### Step 11 - Public Relations Activities

Conduct ongoing public relations activities with school districts administration, school IEP team and parents. Inform them of workshops and training activities that might be helpful, share newsletter articles, invite them to assistive technology open houses hosted by the UAAACT team, make a phone call to see if the assistive technology tools are working properly, etc.